

sacrifice, support and dedication provided by military spouses to our men and women in uniform.

HAVE YOU THANKED A MILITARY SPOUSE TODAY?

In 1984, President Ronald Reagan designated the Friday before Mother's Day as Military Spouse Appreciation Day, a day set aside to recognize the many contributions and sacrifices military spouses make in support of military members and our country.

Yesterday, President Obama made this declaration:

When Americans answer the call to serve in our Armed Forces, a sacred trust is forged. Our men and women in uniform take on the duty of protecting us all, and their spouses and families also help shoulder this important responsibility . . . At the heart of our Armed Forces, servicemembers' spouses keep our military families on track. They balance family life, military life, and their careers all while supporting other military families and giving back to their communities . . . Today, let us honor the spouses and families who support our servicemembers and, in doing so, help defend our Nation and preserve our liberty.

For many military spouses, we have essentially no idea what it means to be a "military spouse" when we say, "I do". We, like many, simply make a pledge that day to support our loved one through good times and bad. However, it quickly becomes apparent that military life is unlike anything we have experienced. When standing at the altar, whether we know it or not, we are making a commitment to serve our country, many times forsaking our desires for a greater cause.

Rarely, will you ever see a military spouse seeking the approval of others for the hat he or she wears. Rarely, will you ever hear a military spouse ask for "Thank Yous" after he or she has kissed their loved one for the last time for 7 months (or longer). Rarely, will you ever witness a military spouse demand compensation for raising their children as a single parent while their loved one deploys for the fourth time in five years.

In just really is not our style.

When you say, "I do" to a Sailor, Marine, Soldier, Airman, or Coast Guardsman, you are immediately inducted into a special society of spouses . . . one that is built on a legacy of those who have sacrificially dedicated their life to the service of their country. A legacy that only understood by those who have walked the walk and talked the talk. From this legacy, we are inspired, encouraged, and supported. We know many before us and along side of us have gotten through it, have overcome the challenges, and persevered when the going gets tough.

We know that there is at least one spouse who has celebrated an anniversary alone and one spouse who watched their child graduate from preschool/high school/college alone. We know there is at least one spouse who moved from one state to another alone. We know there is at least one spouse who has given birth to their first, third, or sixth child alone.

Nevertheless, we are quick to remember that we are never alone. For me personally, Jesus is always by my side. However, for all of us, every military spouse, past or present, is standing side-by-side with us as we continue to overcome the challenges of daily life.

There is a joy like no other when your Sailor, Marine, Soldier, Airman, or Coast Guardsman comes home from deployment or training. There is an excitement that wakes you up at all hours of the night and keeps you from falling back asleep in the days leading up to their return home. There is a

sense of relief as soon as they are in your arms that you have defeated the odds.

These moments make it worthwhile. That first eye-to-eye contact . . . that first embrace . . . that first kiss all remind you why you fell in love with them the first time. It is the overwhelming sense of pride you feel when you see them in uniform as they step off the plane or ship that reminds you that the hat you wear is worth it. It is that first morning that you wake up in their arms that gives you the strength to begin preparing for the next separation.

Military spouses are a breed like no other. While the United States Military has no official authority over us, they really do because they tell us when our loved one will work, when they will stand watch, when they will deploy, and to where we will move next. Their system can be archaic and rigid at times . . . but without it, our loved one's life is at risk. We grow to appreciate this rigidity. We learn to communicate in a language based on acronyms. Moreover, we learn to roll with the punches.

Before we got married, Andy told me that military life is like the tide, frequently changing on a daily basis. There are no certainties to military life other than constant change. Frequently, deployment dates move up and return dates are pushed back. Departure times become earlier and arrival times get later. To be a successful military spouse, you must be resilient because without resiliency, you crack. We are stretched to our limits and then some, with little power to change the situation.

Military spouses are woven together with the same strand of thread when we accept this responsibility with a gracious heart and sacrificial love for our Sailor, Marine, Airman, or Coast Guardsman. And for the military spouses whose loved one has paid the ultimate price in service to our country, we, as a nation, are forever indebted to them for the price they paid as a military spouse.

I write this out of the pride I have to be ND1 Massey's wife. Pride in him as a Mighty Man who serves an Awesome God first and our country second. Pride that reduces me to tears whenever I think of him.

So if you know one, thank one. While they may react humbly, chances are it will mean a great deal to them. Our Sailors, Marines, Soldiers, Airmen, and Coast Guardsmen are so frequently the ones who are thanked . . . and they should be. They are the ones that leave their families at home to fight for a cause they may not always support. However, every once in a while, when we are thanked for wearing this hat, it reassures us that we are remembered and appreciated and it encourages us to face the next challenge head on.

TAX EXTENDERS ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 28, 2010

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, in conjunction with the May 28, 2010, consideration in the U.S. House of Representatives of House amendments to the Senate amendment to H.R. 4213, "The American Jobs and Closing Tax Loopholes Act of 2010," I have asked the non-partisan Joint Committee on Taxation to make available to the public a technical explanation of the provisions included in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 4213. This technical explanation reflects the

Ways and Means Committee's understanding and legislative intent behind those provisions. It is available on the Joint Committee on Taxation website at www.jct.gov and is listed under document number JCX-29-10.

RECOGNIZING THE ROLE AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE ABILITYONE PROGRAM

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 9, 2010

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the participating businesses in the AbilityOne program and for the work they do providing meaningful employment to the disabled of our communities.

AbilityOne provides those who are blind or have other significant disabilities the ability and self-confidence that can come from meaningful employment. AbilityOne jobs sites provide important training to individuals with disabilities that help further integrate them into the broader community where they can earn a living alongside their non-disabled peers.

In my own district, a number of AbilityOne businesses have used the resources this program authorizes to provide employment opportunities to the blind and disabled. Each year, I have the opportunity to meet with the business owners and their workers to hear first hand how participation in this program has enriched their lives and the economic vitality of the local communities in which they are located.

In closing, I encourage all my colleagues to recognize and work with the AbilityOne program sponsors in their own districts and hope that Congress will continue to support and encourage this important employment program for the disabled.

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HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 9, 2010

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise to draw the attention of my colleagues to a successful example of public-private collaboration that marks a new era of government transparency and accountability. It could not have happened without the cooperation of the private sector.

Following President Obama's commitment to let the public track every dollar spent under the economic stimulus package, administration was hard pressed to find a timely and effective way to meet the objective. Many were skeptical, and thought it would take months if not years to develop a website, standardize the information, create a website and keep the information current.

Rather than start from scratch and begin a new procurement process, the Office of Management and Budget opted to leverage an existing program and technology. This wise decision lowered the cost and enabled it to be implemented under an extremely tight timeline.